



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
National Park Service  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

## Federal Subsistence Board

1101 E Tudor Rd, MS 121  
Anchorage Alaska 99503



# SUBSISTENCE FISHING

## SPECIAL ACTION

Under Authority of 50 CFR Part 100.10 and .19  
36 CFR Part 242.10 and .19

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Special Action No.:	3-KS-01-15	Issued at:	Bethel, Alaska May 18, 2015
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Effective Date: May 21, 2015 6:00 a.m.

Expiration Date: July 20, 2015 5:59 a.m. Unless superseded by subsequent Special Action

### EXPLANATION:

This Emergency Special Action closes Chinook salmon fishing to non-Federally qualified users in federal public waters of the Kuskokwim River to provide for escapement.

### REGULATION

50 CFR 100.27(e)(4)(ii) is amended to read:

*Unless superseded by subsequent Special Action,  
Federal public waters in that portion of the Kuskokwim River drainage that are within and adjacent to the exterior boundaries of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge are closed to the harvest of Chinook salmon except by the residents of the Kuskokwim River drainage and the villages of Chefornek, Kipnuk, Kwigillingok and Kongiganak. Based on observed run strength, and in consideration of conservation concerns and escapement goals, the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Manager may open portions of the drainage to the take of Chinook Salmon.*

### JUSTIFICATION


#### *Biological*

Due to the low Chinook salmon returns for the last several years and escapement goals not met at two of three weir projects in 2014, conservation measures are warranted in 2015. The 2014 State

of Alaska Chinook salmon drainage-wide return was estimated at 136,000 fish, well below the annual average of 243,000 fish over the last 25 years. The subsistence harvest in 2014 was estimated to be 12,000 Chinook salmon, a historically low harvest. The escapement for 2014 was estimated at 124,000 Chinook salmon drainage-wide. The State of Alaska drainage-wide escapement goal is 65,000–120,000 Chinook salmon, and the 2015 return is forecasted to be between 96,000 and 163,000 Chinook salmon. At the upper end of that range, there would be enough fish to meet escapement goals and provide for a moderate Chinook salmon subsistence harvest. At the lower end of the projected run, however, even a very limited subsistence harvest could impact the likelihood of achieving escapement goals. Given several consecutive years of low Chinook salmon returns and that escapement goals were not met at two of three weir projects in 2014, conservation measures are warranted in 2015.

FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

By delegation to:

  
Neil Lalonde, Refuge Manager  
Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge

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